

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1. (original) A process for producing a colorant comprising a hydrophobic coloring matter substance, an amphoteric electrolyte and water, said process comprising:

dissolving the hydrophobic coloring matter substance in an organic solvent miscible with water to obtain a coloring matter substance solution in which the concentration of the hydrophobic coloring matter substance is in the range of 1-10 wt%;

contacting said coloring matter substance solution with an anion exchange resin and/or a cation exchange resin to obtain a purified coloring matter substance solution;

adding dropwise, while stirring, said purified coloring matter substance solution into a solution containing an amphoteric electrolyte in de-ionized water at a concentration of 10 wt% or less to obtain a water-containing organic solvent solution of the purified coloring matter substance;

removing the organic solvent component from the water-containing organic solvent solution of the purified coloring matter substance by an azeotropic distillation of water and said organic solvent, while supplying de-ionized water and/or an organic solvent if necessary, under an ambient or a reduced pressure, to obtain an aqueous solution containing the coloring matter substance and the amphoteric electrolyte; and

subjecting said aqueous solution containing a coloring matter substance and an amphoteric electrolyte to high-speed centrifugation.

Claim 2. (original) A process according to claim 1, wherein the solution containing the amphoteric electrolyte in de-ionized water is the aqueous solution containing said coloring matter substance and an amphoteric electrolyte.

Claim 3. (currently amended) A process according to ~~claim 1 or 2~~ claim 1, wherein said hydrophobic coloring matter substance is an oil-soluble dye and said amphoteric electrolyte is an amino acid.

Claim 4. (currently amended) A process according to ~~claim 1 or 2~~ claim 1, wherein said hydrophobic coloring matter substance is an oil-soluble dye and said amphoteric electrolyte is an amphoteric electrolyte having an isoelectric point of 6 or higher.

Claim 5. (currently amended) A process according to ~~claim 1 or 2~~ claim 1, wherein said hydrophobic substance is an oil-soluble dye and said amphoteric electrolyte is arginine, histidine, glycine or combination thereof.

Claim 6. (currently amended) A colorant obtainable by the process according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 5~~ claim 1.